



# El Cajon Gateway

**CITY NEWS  
& GUIDE TO  
RECREATION  
SPRING '22**



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## City of El Cajon (619) 441-1776

El Cajon City Hall  
200 Civic Center Way  
El Cajon, CA 92020

[www.elcajon.gov](http://www.elcajon.gov)

## City Council (619) 441-1788

Mayor Bill Wells  
Deputy Mayor Gary Kendrick  
Councilmember Steve Goble  
Councilmember Michelle Metschel  
Councilmember Phil Ortiz

## City Departments

City Attorney	(619) 441-1798
City Clerk	(619) 441-1763
City Manager	(619) 441-1716
Community Development	(619) 441-1741
Finance	(619) 441-1668
Fire Administration	(619) 441-1601
Human Resources	(619) 441-1736
Information Technology	(619) 441-1535
Police Administration	(619) 579-3311
Public Works	(619) 441-1653
Public Works Operations	(619) 441-1658
Recreation	(619) 441-1754

## Emergency 9-1-1

Call 9-1-1 when there is a medical emergency, fire, crime in progress, or a life-threatening situation.

## Non-Emergency

Police (619) 579-3311  
Fire (619) 441-1600

## About the Cover:

*Sustainable Energy and renewable resources, the way of the future.*

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## Daylight Saving Time Begins

Daylight saving time begins on March 13<sup>th</sup>. Adjust your clocks by springing forward one hour. It is also an excellent time to change the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.







## City Manager's Welcome to The Gateway

Welcome to The Gateway. My name is Graham Mitchell and I am grateful to serve as your city manager.

This issue of The Gateway focuses on the City's efforts toward being more environmentally sustainable. In 2020, the El Cajon City Council adopted the El Cajon Sustainability Initiative, a document that serves as the City's roadmap towards its environmental goals. I am happy to report that we are making significant headway, implementing projects that also result in a healthy return on the taxpayers' investment into their community.

In addition to the sustainability articles in this issue of The Gateway, dozens of other important topics are covered, such as how to join the El Cajon Citizens Police Academy, where your taxes go, an update on Wells Park's renovations, and much more.

I do wish to highlight some of the successes the City had this past year. Last March, the El Cajon City Council met and developed a list of high priorities for the community. These priorities included: Communication/Civic Engagement, Economic Development, Enhance the Image of the City, Homelessness, Public Safety, and Miscellaneous.

For each priority, several goals were established—16 goals or objectives in all. For each goal, a series of 48 major tasks or milestones were developed. I am happy to report that all but one goal was accomplished or is underway. The one incomplete goal is waiting on the completion of a comprehensive economic development strategic plan. To see a list of the goals and accomplishments from 2021, visit [www.elcajon.gov/CCAP2021](http://www.elcajon.gov/CCAP2021).

The City Council reconvened and conducted a follow-up priority/goal setting workshop on January 27, 2022. A special thanks to the residents that attended the workshop and provided important input. The City Council, during the workshop, identified priorities and goals for 2022. For more details about the 2022 City Council Action Plan, see the article on page 4.

I hope this issue of The Gateway is helpful to you as a citizen of El Cajon. If there are areas in which you feel the City can improve, let me know. Please contact me at (619) 441-1718 or [gmitchell@elcajon.gov](mailto:gmitchell@elcajon.gov).

### SEE WHAT WE'RE UP TO!



@cityofelcajon  
@heartlandfire



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@elcajonrec  
@elcajonpolice  
@heartlandfire  
@elcajonhr



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@heartlandfire



@cityofelcajon



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# 2022 City Council Action Plan

As introduced in the City Manager's welcoming message, earlier this year on January 27th, the Mayor and City Council met with members of the public and the City's executive team to identify the highest priorities for 2022, along with accompanying goals. The collection of these priorities, goals, and supporting milestones/tasks make up the 2022 City Council Action Plan. Having a City Council Action Plan presents a clear message to the community on what the City Council aims to accomplish, provides direction on how to allocate limited time and resources, and creates a more transparent government.

The 2022 priorities include City Beautification, Downtown El Cajon, Economic Development, Homelessness, Public Safety, and several Miscellaneous goals. The following are the 22 goals associated with these priorities. Because these goals are still being developed for final approval, some items may change slightly in the next month.

## City Beautification

- Promote the many City renewal projects.
- Create safer, well lit, and beautified streets.
- Initiate neighborhood cleanup projects.

## Downtown El Cajon

- Analyze how to best leverage the assessments collected on Downtown property owners to enhance the Downtown.
- Keep the Downtown clean and vibrant.
- Initiate a catalyst development project.

## Economic Development

- Implement strategies identified in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Re-envision Parkway Plaza.
- Connect City events with The Magnolia.
- Integrate Foodie Fest into America on Main Street.
- Initiate a catalyst project in the Transit District Specific Plan area.

## Homelessness

- Promote successes of the City's homeless strategy.
- Coordinate homeless services with other cities and the County in the East San Diego County region.

- Ensure illegal homeless lodging sites are addressed within 72 hours of being reported.
- Create a homeless widget on the City's mobile phone app.
- Reduce illegal panhandling.

## Public Safety

- Add ten additional positions to the Police Department.
- Reduce the number of high speeding incidents.

## Miscellaneous

- Increase public engagement, promotion of City projects, and celebration of accomplishments in the City.
- Position the City to more effectively address regional issues impacting El Cajon residents and businesses.
- Develop a plan to replace and enhance the El Cajon Veterans' Memorial.
- Consider impactful one-time uses of the General Fund Reserves for projects that will improve the community or yield a financial return.

To see regular updates of progress being made on the City Council Action Plan, visit [www.elcajon.gov/CAPP](http://www.elcajon.gov/CAPP).



## How is My Sales Tax Used?

For most California cities, sales tax revenue is a primary funding source. For the City of El Cajon, sales tax generated by local businesses and paid by consumers makes up about 47% of the General Fund budget.

Sales tax paid by consumers can differ from city to city depending on other added sales tax measures. For example, in El Cajon, the sales tax rate is 8.25%. This means that for every dollar of taxable sales spent in El Cajon, 8.25 cents is collected in sales tax. Once a business collects the tax, it is sent to the State, who then sends it back to various government agencies.

The graph to the right shows where your sales tax dollars actually go. As the graph illustrates, very little of it comes back to El Cajon.

All cities receive a base amount of sales tax (1 cent for every dollar spent in that community). El Cajon, like many jurisdictions, also has an additional sales tax. Approved by the voters in 2008, Prop J adds another ½ cent sales tax on items purchased. This additional sales tax

generates about \$11 million annually. These funds pay for vital municipal services such as law enforcement, fire and rescue, and park maintenance.

Prop J's term ends in 2028. Over the next few years, staff will be exploring how the City can function without Prop J funding and which services would need to be cut or how to extend the life of Prop J. The City will be seeking your input on these important questions.

### Where Your Sales Tax Dollar Goes (El Cajon Tax Rate: 8.25%)



For every \$1 spent in the City of El Cajon, 8.25 cents are collected as sales tax. From this, only 1.5 cents stays with the City and the remaining 6.75 cents goes to the State or the County.



# Broadway Creek Restoration

The City of El Cajon plans to revitalize a portion of Broadway Creek that is located in the San Diego River Watershed. Through a combination of grant funds, the City has allocated \$2 million for this project—much of the funding coming from the San Diego River Conservancy and the Department of Water Resources' Urban Streams Restoration Program.

The project focuses on restoring the creek's natural vegetation and habitat as well as reducing the risk of flooding. The project promotes sustainability and provides an abundance of environmental and community benefits, including enhancing water and air quality.



*Project addresses flooding and restores native, riparian, and wetland habitat.*



*Recent Rain Event*

The restoration encompasses one of the last remaining creeks within the City. The City thanks the following partners for funding the project: San Diego River Park Foundation, County of San Diego, Priest Development, California

Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Project construction begins this spring, with estimated completion in the late summer of 2022. Motorists can expect an approximate two-month long closure of Ballantyne Street north of Broadway while the restoration takes place.

Visit [www.elcajon.gov/BroadwayCreek](http://www.elcajon.gov/BroadwayCreek) for more information about the project.

## Sustainability Initiative Implementation

Over the last decade, the City has taken steps to address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, both in the City's operations as well as activities in the broader community. In 2020, the City formally adopted the El Cajon Sustainability Initiative, which includes strategies to reduce pollution, improve community resilience, better manage natural resources, and to be more sustainable in our use of energy and water.

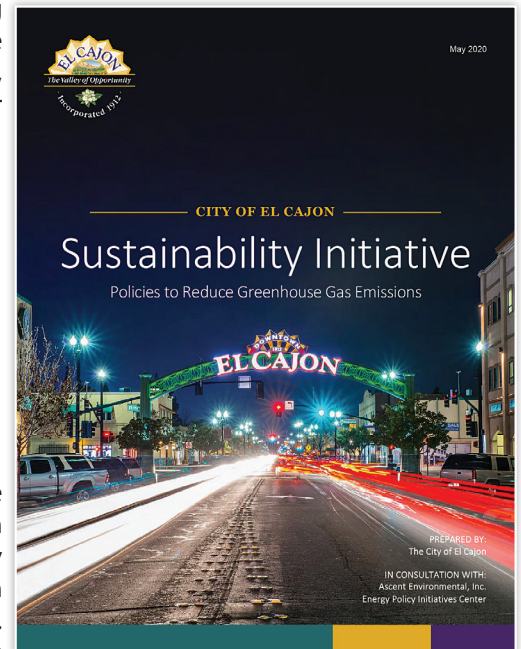
Specifically, the Sustainability Initiative includes goals in the following areas:

- Enhance City Vehicles,
- Reduce Fuel Use,
- Reduce Vehicle Miles,
- Increase Building Energy Efficiencies,
- Increase Use and Generation of Renewable Energy,
- Conserve Water,
- Increase Recycling and Reduce Generation of Solid Waste, and
- Plant More Trees.

During 2021, the City experienced new investment in the community to help complete goals established in the Sustainability Initiatives. These efforts resulted in GHG emission reductions through increases in renewable energy generation and community infrastructure. In 2021, approximately 700 solar photovoltaic systems were installed on private properties that generate more than approximately 685,000 watts of energy. This equates to providing electricity to 88 homes for one year. Electric vehicle charging increased with 124 new residential and commercial charging stations, which includes charging stations at the Ronald Reagan Community Center funded through a grant from San Diego Gas & Electric.

The City is committed to implementing and monitoring its Sustainability Initiative. Effective and long-term climate action in the City can only be achieved through efforts that continue to improve the way individuals interact with the environment. If you would like to find out more information about the City's Sustainability Initiatives, visit [www.elcajon.gov/sustainability](http://www.elcajon.gov/sustainability) and see a follow up article on the City's progress on page 6.

If you have ideas how the City can improve sustainability please contact the Community Development Department at (619) 441-1742 or [planning@elcajon.gov](mailto:planning@elcajon.gov).





# The El Cajon 8 Environmental Strategy Goals

As introduced on the previous page, the El Cajon City Council adopted the City's Sustainability Initiative in 2020. Prior to and since its adoption, that City has made significant strides in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and becoming a more sustainable City. The Sustainability Initiative provides the City with a strategic roadmap and helps to measure overall reductions in GHG emissions. This article highlights progress made toward the City's Sustainability Initiative.

## Strategy 1: Enhance City Vehicle Fleet

As City vehicles come due for replacement, the City evaluates whether to replace them with alternative fueled vehicles. Currently, the City has two plug-in hybrid and two standard hybrid vehicles that have delivered a gasoline savings of over 205 gallons and 775 kg of GHG savings annually. Charging stations at City worksites also incentivizes employees to purchase zero-emission or alternative fuel options. City employees used 840 charging sessions last year, amounting to 2,100 gallons of gasoline savings and 7,937 kg of GHG savings.



## Strategy 2: Reduce Fuel Use

The City works to reduce on-road transportation fuel consumption by improving traffic flow and increasing the efficiency of the existing transportation network. The City has installed miles of fiber optic cable, CCTV cameras, video detection cameras, and 2,070 traffic controllers to monitor the flow of traffic and manage traffic light sequencing in real-time.

The synchronization of 65 of the City's 113 traffic signals allows a maximum number of vehicles to pass through each intersection, reducing stops and delays by 25% and decreasing overall fuel consumption by 5%. Efforts are now underway to synchronize 30 more intersections. The City's systems also allow real-time adjustments to shift traffic patterns during construction or accidents.



The installation of roundabouts along El Cajon Boulevard will further reduce fuel usage through improved traffic flow. This project is expected to begin this summer.

At the onset of the pandemic, the City adopted a Telework and Flexible Work Schedule program. This enables employees to commute fewer times during the week, reducing significant

transportation costs and energy use. Reducing the weekly number of trips to the office by just one day results in a 20% reduction in fuel use and emissions.

## Strategy 3: Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled

The City encourages development in the Transit Development Specific Plan area to increase housing located near public transportation.

## Strategy 4: Increase Building Energy Efficiency

The City has undertaken several upgrades to its buildings to increase building energy efficiency. These include upgrading the HVAC system with energy efficient technology at City Hall and The Magnolia, upgrading pool pumps at Fletcher Hills Pool, and installing LED lighting at Wells Park Recreation Center.

## Strategy 5: Renewable Energy and Zero-Carbon Energy

The City Council recently approved installing approximately 1,000 solar PV panels and a battery system at the Public Safety Center. The energy generated could provide power for approximately 250 residential homes for 4 hours. The project's planned renewable energy improvements will offset power usage at the Public Safety Center facility by nearly 40%.

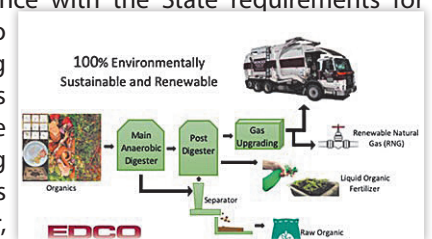


## Strategy 6: Increase Water Efficiency

To conserve water, the City is upgrading medians and right-of-way areas to include drought-tolerant plants and trees and low flow sprinkler irrigation.

## Strategy 7: Reduce & Recycle Solid Waste

The El Cajon Public Works Department manages the City's integrated waste management activities, including solid waste franchise administration and compliance with the State requirements for reducing waste directed to the landfill. Much is being done in this area, such as diverting organic waste from landfills and increasing recycling. The City's franchised waste hauler, EDCO, now operates a new anaerobic digestion facility, which converts recycled organics into renewable natural gas to power EDCO fleet trucks, while preventing methane gas from being released into the atmosphere. This process can significantly contribute to the management of organic waste and help El Cajon achieve the State-mandated 75% diversion rate by 2025.



## Strategy 8: Carbon Sequestration

The name of this strategy is a technical way to say, "plant more trees" in an effort to offset CO2 emissions generated by other sources. The City oversees the planting and maintenance of trees in City parks, public grounds, medians, and in parkways along City streets. The current tree maintenance inventory includes over 7,000 trees of various types. As part of the Urban Forestry Program, residents can request a parkway tree free of charge. This program lowers the urban heat island effect, adds shade, and reduces carbon and greenhouse gas emissions.





# Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program

Are you in need of home repairs? The City of El Cajon may be able to assist! The City relaunched its Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program in January 2022. This program has become part of the City's long-term commitment toward a greener community and to improving housing conditions for all.



Before



After

The program provides funding to income-qualified households for housing rehabilitation assistance (home efficiency, safety, and accessibility). Funded by the federal government, the program can result in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the community. Assistance is available to single-family residences located within the city limits and to mobile homes located in eligible mobile-home parks.

Eligible improvements under this program include, but are not limited to, energy efficiency retrofits such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system repair, insulation and weatherization,

lead-based paint hazards, door and window replacements, and electrical and plumbing repair work. Eligible improvements must meet all health and safety requirements, local building, and zoning codes upon the completion of the project.

Funding is provided as a loan with zero-percent interest (unless the loan is in default) and no monthly payments. Repayment is deferred and each loan becomes due and payable if the property is sold, rented, refinanced, transferred, or is no longer owner-occupied. Loan amounts can be up to \$50,000 for a single-family residence and up to \$20,000 for mobile homes. To qualify, the homeowner must have owned the property for at least one year. Household income and maximum property value restrictions apply.

To learn more, please visit [www.elcajon.gov/housing](http://www.elcajon.gov/housing) or call (619) 441-1710.

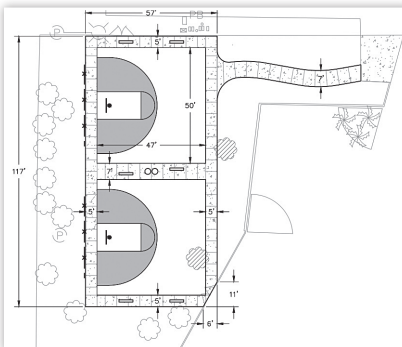
## More Exciting Projects Coming to Wells Park!

Since 2016, the City has completed seven projects at Wells Park:

- Dog agility course and new shade structures,
- Boys & Girls Club gravel path with building and ballfield fencing,
- Replacement of a 300-foot restroom sewer pipe,
- Public Safety Substation for Park Rangers,
- 820-feet of ornamental fencing and security gates,
- 14 LED parking lot light poles, and
- The soccer mini-pitch court.



These projects have been complimented with new programming and services in the park, including winter special events, Rec Squad free afterschool activities, and movies in the park. City staff have seen a positive shift toward park usage with the additional active recreation amenities. More is in store at Wells Park!



### Basketball Courts

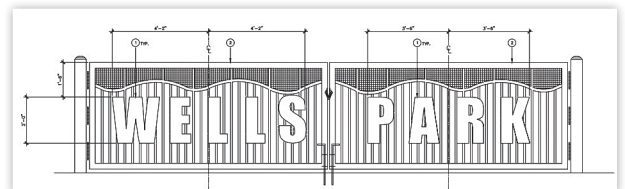
Two 50 by 50-foot basketball half-courts will be constructed adjacent to the soccer mini-pitch. The courts will include acrylic surfacing, LED lighting, and benches alongside the courts.

### Restroom Renovations

The existing public restroom will undergo significant changes that will better serve the community. The structure will be modernized with a new layout, improved lighting, new fixtures, and other security enhancements.

### Storm Water Treatment, Landscaping, and new Signage

Two large bio-retention basins will be constructed along the park entrances. Bio-retention basins are landscaped depressions used to slow and treat storm water runoff, which feature decorative landscaping and new trees. The project includes new, colorful entry signage and a complete renovation of the existing trash enclosure.



Learn more about improvements to Wells Park and other projects at [www.elcajon.gov](http://www.elcajon.gov) or call (619) 441-1653.



## Join the El Cajon Citizens Police Academy!

Have you ever wondered what the day-to-day is like for a police officer? Are you curious about the level of training officers go through to keep the public safe? Would you like to experience hands-on simulations of what officers encounter? If so, then the El Cajon Citizens' Police Academy is for you!

Relaunched in June 2021, the Citizens Police Academy meets one evening a week for a month, plus one Saturday, to learn about all the different divisions of the El Cajon Police Department.



October 2021 Academy Graduates



These include:

- Patrol
- Communications
- Traffic
- Specialized Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)
- The Drone Unit
- Special Enforcement Unit
- Investigations
- Gangs
- PERT, and
- The Crisis Negotiations Team (CNT)

During the academy, participants witness a K9 demo, receive hands-on training in the forensics lab, participate in police ride-a-longs, and are placed in situational de-escalation scenarios. If you are interested in learning more about the El Cajon Police Department, this year's academies are in April, July, and October. Applications are available at [www.elcajon.gov/Citizens\\_Police\\_Academy](http://www.elcajon.gov/Citizens_Police_Academy). Contact Community Information Officer Amanda Stills at (619) 441-1597 with any questions.

## Detectives Evan Gallivan and Billy Sylvester, the 2021 Officers of the Year!

During the 2021 calendar year, Detectives Evan Gallivan and Billy Sylvester made over 160 arrests for various charges including illegal possession of narcotics, weapons, and stolen property, arson, burglary, robbery, and homicide.

Detectives Gallivan and Sylvester were tasked to help in an investigation for a homicide, during which they worked for two weeks and ultimately presented a complete case to the DA's office. They were also instrumental in solving several gang-related homicides.

On multiple occasions, they provided first aid or CPR to victims with serious injuries, including the application of a tourniquet that ultimately saved the subject's life. These incidents show their dedication to Law Enforcement's first and primary obligation of preserving life.

Detectives Gallivan and Sylvester are proactive officers, tenacious investigators, department trainers and mentors, and are flexible to perform any task given to them in any capacity. Because of their outstanding performance in these tasks and assignments, the El Cajon Police Department is proud to have selected them as the Officers of the Year for 2021!



## Stephanie Ramirez – ECPD's Employee of the Year



Meet Stephanie Ramirez, the El Cajon Police Department's Employee of the Year for 2021! Stephanie began her career with ECPD in 2012 as a volunteer. She was hired full-time in 2014 as a Records Specialist in the Records Division and transferred to the Investigations Division in 2017 where she makes a tremendous impact.

Among the numerous duties and responsibilities that Stephanie oversees, she assists in investigating all homicide investigations, which require pinpoint accuracy. She maintains the highest standards of quality control and ensures that the work being done by investigators can withstand the scrutiny of the toughest courtrooms. She is as involved in solving every homicide as the detectives who handcuff the suspects.

Stephanie's hard work and dedication has earned her employee of the month four times, the Meritorious Service Award, as well as a Class C Commendation. The El Cajon Police Department, the City of El Cajon, and the citizens of El Cajon are lucky to have such a dedicated individual working in the investigations division.



# City Allocates Over \$2.5 Million to Address Homelessness

In 2020, the City received funding through the CARES Act that allowed for the expansion of several successful programs aimed at addressing homelessness. This enabled the City—over the 24-month period from January 2020 through December 2021—to allocate \$2.48 million on homelessness assistance/housing programs, over \$300,000 on neighborhood cleanup efforts, and \$15,000 to the Homeless Task Force. Staff estimates that during this period, more than 2,900 individuals received shelter services, with more than 700 being assisted into permanent housing.

The following table provides an overview of funding and the results of City programs between January 2020 and December 2021:

Program	Allocation	Expenditures	Results (Services / Permanent Housing)
EC Homeless Outreach	\$400,000	\$170,797	917 / 114
A Way Back Home	\$20,000	\$2,707	9 / 9
ECTLC Emergency Shelter	\$585,294	\$461,524	1,547 / 420
Rotational Shelter Program	\$20,000	\$14,792	86 / 44
Housing/Utility Assistance	\$672,362	\$433,320	103 / 103
Emergency Motel Stays	\$145,000	\$142,568	243 / 47
EC Homeless Task Force	\$15,000	\$15,000	Regional Coordination
City Quality of Life Team	\$300,000	\$300,000	116 cleanups / 610 tons removed
City Homeless Outreach	\$40,787	\$40,787	975 contacts made
Emergency Scatter-Site Motel	\$400,000	\$14,340	52
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2,957 / 737</b>

To learn about the programs listed above or to learn how to access services, visit [www.elcagon.gov/homelessness](http://www.elcagon.gov/homelessness).

## Fire Prevention Safety

Reduce wildfire risk to your home by doing the following this spring:

- ✓ Clean your roof/gutters of leaves and needles
- ✓ Trim all tree branches overhanging your house
- ✓ Clear dead wood and dense flammable vegetation near your home
- ✓ Create a fuel free zone 0-5 feet from all structures with no combustible materials
- ✓ Remove all dead and dying vegetation including weeds, tree limbs, and branches from property
- ✓ Do all maintenance before 10 a.m. or after 6 p.m.
  - **NEVER** in the heat of the day or when the wind is blowing.
  - **NEVER** burn weeds, trash, or rubbish.
  - **NEVER** use lawn mowers to mow dry vegetation.
  - **NEVER** put yourself in harms way to extinguish a fire.
  - Keep a cell phone nearby and call 911 immediately in case of a fire.



**FIRE RESCUE**  
SERVING THE CITIES OF  
EL CAJON \* LA MESA \* LEMON GROVE

**For Questions Contact Heartland Fire & Rescue  
(619) 667-1355**

To file a complaint visit our website at  
[Heartlandfire.org](http://Heartlandfire.org)



## Benefits of Locking Dumpster

The City of El Cajon encourages property owners and managers with dumpsters to lock them. There are several benefits to locking a dumpster. First, it prevents illegal dumpster scavenging by people looking for scrap metal, cans, bottles, and other items that can be recycled. It also helps deter illegal dumping by those looking for a free, quick, and easy way to throw away bulky trash. Locking and securing your trash is a simple way to keep your property and the community clean from trash and debris caused by illegal dumping.

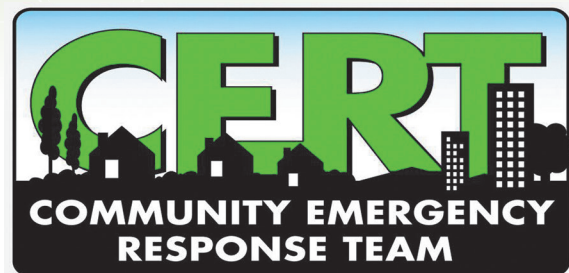


# 10 PUBLIC SAFETY

## What is CERT?

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a free program that serves the cities of El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, and Santee. CERT trains residents to become better prepared to respond to emergency situations in their communities. Using skills learned in the classroom and in hands-on demonstrations, CERT volunteers work in teams as part of an overall coordinated response, assisting others in their community following a disaster when professional responders may not be immediately available to help.

By organizing and providing immediate assistance to victims, CERT volunteers can provide critical support to first responders. CERT volunteers can also take part in supporting the safety of their community by helping with non-emergency projects and overall disaster preparedness. For more information, visit East County CERT's Facebook page or visit [www.heartlandfire.org/101/Emergency-Preparedness](http://www.heartlandfire.org/101/Emergency-Preparedness).



## EAST COUNTY

Serving the cities of  
El Cajon - La Mesa - Lemon Grove - Santee

## When to call 9-1-1



What type of emergencies require a 9-1-1 call?  
Threatening emergencies.

### When should you call 9-1-1?

- MEDICAL EMERGENCY such as chest pains, seizures, or excessive bleeding.
- CRIME occurring in progress such as robbery, burglary or fights.
- FIRE including brush fires, buildings, vehicles.
- LIFE THREATENING SITUATIONS such as traffic accidents.

### What should you say when 9-1-1 answers?

- STAY CALM and SPEAK CLEARLY.
- LOCATION – Tell the dispatcher where the emergency is taking place.
- EMERGENCY – Tell the dispatcher what is the emergency.
- YOUR INFORMATION – Provide your name, phone number, and address.
- STAY ON THE LINE to answer questions until the dispatcher tells you to hang up.

### In cases of non-emergency, dial:

Police non-emergency: (619) 579-3311  
Fire non-emergency: (619) 441-1600

## Why join CERT?

If a major disaster strikes in your community, will you be prepared? If communication systems and major utilities become inoperable, do you have a plan? First responders may not be immediately available to assist you and your neighbors in the event of an emergency as they may be responding to other critical incidents.

CERT training provides you with the decision-making and physical skills to offer immediate assistance to family members and neighbors during a large-scale emergency. While people can respond to others in need without this training, the goal of the CERT program is to teach you do so effectively and efficiently without placing yourself or others in unnecessary danger.

Prepare yourself and your family now through free CERT training, available to all adults 18 years of age and older, with classes held in East County by Heartland and Santee Fire Departments. Volunteers receive 20+ hours of free classroom and hands-on training where they learn basic skills such as:

- Disaster Preparedness,
- Fire Suppression,
- Medical Operations,
- Light Search and Rescue,
- Sheltering, and
- Disaster Psychology and Team Organization.

Applicants must submit an application, attend an in-person interview, and agree to a criminal background check at no-charge to the applicant. For more information, visit [www.heartlandfire.org](http://www.heartlandfire.org).







## Prevent Over-Irrigation Pollution by Reducing Outdoor Watering

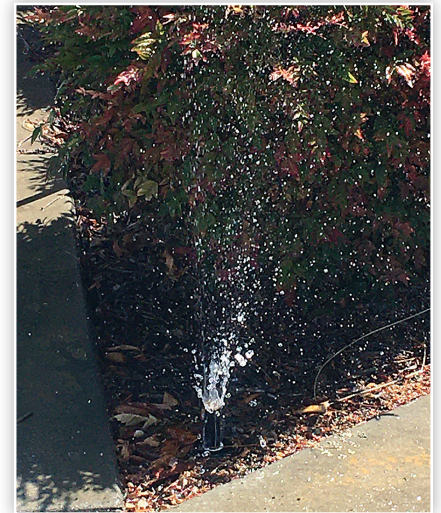
Overwatering landscaped areas may result in excess irrigation water and pollutants flowing into the storm drain system. The excess irrigation water that flows off your property and into gutters can pick up pollutants including sediment, fertilizers, pesticides, trash, and bacteria. When fertilizers and pesticides wash into our local waterways, they can poison fish and contaminate the runoff. Organics, such as grass clippings and leaves, are rich in nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen. As these organics decompose, they can cause algal blooms and bacteria growth that degrade water quality and adversely affect wildlife.

Landscaped areas generally place the highest demand on water resources; however, much of this water is needlessly wasted due to runoff and evaporation. The amount of water required for maintaining landscaping depends on the types and locations of the plants (i.e., lawn, flowers, trees, and shrubs). The length of time spent watering landscaped areas should reflect a plant's need.

In El Cajon, most urban runoff goes into Forrester Creek, which empties into the San Diego River. Polluted runoff can negatively affect the downstream environment, including where the San Diego River meets the Pacific Ocean in Ocean Beach. By implementing a few simple steps, we can significantly reduce the impact on Forester Creek.

### Simple Water Saving Tips

- 💧 Water your lawn 2 days per week for 5-8 minutes per day or less.
- 💧 Water during late night to early morning hours (6:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m.).
- 💧 Do not water lawns for 48 hours after measurable rainfall.
- 💧 Adjust watering times and schedules to ensure that the appropriate amount of water is utilized on landscaped areas.
- 💧 Avoid watering lawns on windy days.
- 💧 Fertilize/reseed your lawn in mid to late spring.
- 💧 Remove weeds from your lawn; they rob your lawn of water.
- 💧 Maintain sprinkler heads and nozzles in good working condition.
- 💧 Set up your sprinklers so they do not spray hardscape surfaces (sidewalk or driveway).
- 💧 Mix mulch into the soil matrix to help retain moisture and help reduce the need for frequent watering.
- 💧 Use an automatic timer to program each watering zone for only the amount of water needed.



Report over-irrigation discharges at [www.elcajon.gov/stormwater](http://www.elcajon.gov/stormwater). For more information, contact your local water supply company: Helix Water District at (619) 466-0585, Padre Dam Municipal Water District at (619) 448-3111, or the El Cajon Storm Water Protection Program at (619) 441-1653.





# 12 STORM WATER

## California Senate Bill 1383

California Senate Bill No. 1383 (SB 1383) passed in 2016 as an effort to fight climate change by recycling organic waste and recovering edible food that would otherwise be disposed in the landfills. This is a statewide effort to reduce emissions with the goals of reducing organic waste disposal by at least 50% by 2020 and 75% by 2025, and reducing edible food from entering landfills by 20% by 2025.

Landfills emit 20% of the state's methane, which is a climate super pollutant that is 84 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Since organics such as food scraps, yard trimmings, paper, and cardboard make up half of what Californians dump in landfills, reducing organic waste will have the fastest impact on the climate crisis.

Under SB 1383, the City of El Cajon is required to do the following:

- Pass a City Ordinance or enforceable mechanism with SB 1383 requirements.
- Provide organic waste collection services to all residents and businesses.
- Establish and maintain an Edible Food Recovery Program.
- Annual procurement requirements – use a certain amount of recycled organics products.
- Recycled-content paper procurement – all paper purchases must contain 30% post-consumer recycled content when available at no greater cost than non-recycled products.
- Inspection and enforcement.
- Recordkeeping and reporting.
- Education and outreach.
- Capacity Planning – plan for necessary organic waste recycling and food recovery capacity needed to divert organic waste from the landfills into recycling activities and food recovery organizations.

The City of El Cajon started organics recycling services for residents and businesses on January 1, 2022. The City understands that this is a major change and thanks the community for participating in this important statewide effort.

For more information, please visit [www.calrecycle.ca.gov](http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov).



EDCO's residential trash, recycling and organics collection.

## California Water Conservation Emergency Regulations



On October 19, 2021, the State of California proclaimed a drought state of emergency for all counties in California, urging Californians to step up their water conservation efforts. On January 18, 2022, the California Water Board's emergency drought regulations went into effect. These regulations remain in effect for one year unless the California Water Board acts to end, modify, or extend it. The emergency directives are designed to help promote water conservation and prohibit the use of potable water for the following uses:

- Applying water to outdoor landscapes resulting in more than incidental runoff
- Washing vehicles without an automatic shutoff nozzle
- Washing impervious areas (driveways, sidewalks, etc.)
- Street cleaning or construction prep
- Decorative fountains, lakes, or ponds
- Irrigating lawns within 48 hours of one-fourth of an inch (1/4") of rainfall
- Irrigating lawns on public medians

Warnings or fines of up to \$500 can occur for not following these State regulations. To file a complaint about water waste, visit [www.savewater.ca.gov](http://www.savewater.ca.gov). Once a complaint is filed, it will be directed to the correct water district for review and enforcement. El Cajon residents may also contact either Helix Water District at (619) 466-0585 or Padre Dam Municipal Water District at (619) 448-3111, depending on your water provider. For further information, please visit: [www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues).



# Pet Pollution Can Be a Serious Problem!



For some, walking their dogs can be an everyday activity. Studies show that about half of dog owners walk their dogs in public places. Sadly, only 40% of dog owners fail to clean up after their pets. In a community the size of El Cajon, with about 105,000 residents and roughly 6,000 dogs, dogs generate close to 3,000 pounds of feces per day—that is over 1 million pounds each year!

The significant amount of dog feces not properly disposed of adds harmful bacteria to storm drains and waterways. Pet waste left on the ground can be washed into our local storm drains, all of which drain directly into natural water bodies, such as creeks and rivers, without treatment of any kind. Breathing this waste can cause sickness to humans and the mucky algal mat film that develops suffocates fish. The same bacteria that makes pet waste dangerous to people in parks can make the water unsafe for swimming or drinking.

If bacteria from pet waste gets into shellfish beds, it can make clams and oysters unsafe to eat. Children who play in yards or in parks where pet waste is not properly disposed can pick up illnesses from disease-causing bacteria and parasites. This can include diarrhea, fever, muscle aches, headaches, vomiting, and roundworms.

## How You Can Make a Difference and Keep Our Water Clean

When walking with your pet, take a plastic bag along and dispose of your pet's waste properly by:

- ✓ Putting pet waste in the household trash after securely wrapping it.
- ✓ Picking up after your pets before cleaning patios, driveways, and other hard surface areas—never hose pet waste into the street or gutter.
- ✓ Cleaning up pet waste in your yard frequently.

With so many dogs in our community, not cleaning up and properly disposing of pet waste can be a huge pollution problem. By cleaning up your pet waste and properly disposing of it, you can be an active and important part of the pollution solution.

For more information or to report illegal dumping, contact the El Cajon Storm Water Protection Program at (619) 441-1653 or visit [www.elcajon.gov/stormwater](http://www.elcajon.gov/stormwater).



## 2022 El Cajon Community Dump Day

**This service is free and for City of El Cajon residents only.**

**When:** Saturday, Apr. 9, 2022      **Time:** 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.      **Location:** Wells Park, 1153 E. Madison Avenue

### Examples of what you may bring:

- Furniture (e.g., sofas, chairs and dressers). Appliances (e.g., washers, dryers and refrigerators)
- Mattresses (please wrap prior to arriving at the event - special mattress disposal bags can be purchased at hardware stores, e.g., Home Depot, Lowe's, etc.)
- Greens (must be bagged or tied into bundles not to exceed 4' in length or 18" in diameter)

Questions? Please email us at [csrlg@edcodisposal.com](mailto:csrlg@edcodisposal.com), send a text message to (619) 202-8365, visit our website at [edcodisposal.com](http://edcodisposal.com) and fill out our Contact Us form, or call (619) 287-7555.

**EDCO**  
edcodisposal.com  
"We'll Take Care of It"



## FREE Paper Shredding, E-Waste, and Mulch Giveaway Event!

EDCO's FREE Paper Shredding, Electronic Waste, and Mulch Giveaway Event is coming up! Protect the security of your confidential information by shredding your personal documents.

**Saturday, May 14, 2022 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Wells Park 1153 E. Madison Avenue, El Cajon**

**Shredding:** Limit two (2) banker boxes (10" x 12" x 15") per household.

**E-Waste:** Acceptable items include computers, monitors, central processing units (CPUs), laptops, computer components, printers, scanners, fax machines, VCRs, radios, cell phones.

**Free Mulch:** Also available will be free mulch for El Cajon residents (while supplies last). This is a self-serve, self-loading, and self-haul service, so please bring your own cans/bags, gloves and shovel. Limit of 3 cans/bags per vehicle. If you plan to haul your mulch in an open truck or trailer, please remember to bring a tarp to cover your material.





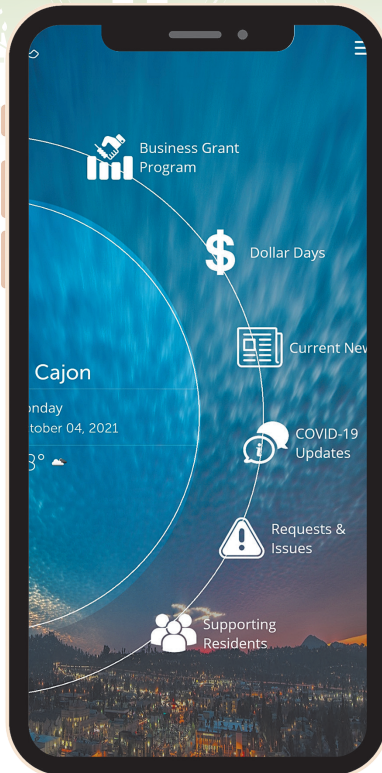
# 14 COMMUNITY EVENTS



## El Cajon City App

You may have heard that the El Cajon City app updates residents on City programs and events, as well as providing a list of local businesses, but did you know that you could request services and report problems too?

From debris in the road or storm channels to graffiti on public property, the City can assist you through a quick and user-friendly process. The average turnaround for services is one day, with thousands of requests already completed. The app is available on both Apple and Android platforms. Download the app and connect with us today.



## FLY, FLY AWAY!



### Passport application acceptance will resume this summer.

The El Cajon City Clerk's Office will resume accepting passport applications this summer. This service is offered only by appointment and is available only to new applicants applying for their first passport and renewals. An application is considered a renewal only if the last passport was issued under age 16, if the passport expired over five years ago, or was lost or damaged. Please review passport document and photo requirements at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) prior to arriving at your appointment.

Please review passport document and photo requirements at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov).

Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
Alternate Fridays: 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



## MAGNOLIA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



### Events at The Magnolia are back! Here is the initial spring lineup:

March 15 Al Di Meola  
April 15 The Alan Parsons Live Project  
April 23 Dr. Jordan B. Peterson: Beyond Order  
April 25 The Bachelor Live  
May 21 Sal Vulcano  
May 24 Bunbury – TOUR 2022 – 35 AÑOS

May 25 OMD Souvenir OMD 40 Years – Greatest Hits  
June 5 Joe Jackson: The 'Sing You Sinners!' Tour  
June 13 Andrew Bird and Iron & Wine – Outside Problems Tour

Visit [www.magnoliasandiego.com](http://www.magnoliasandiego.com) for the latest performance schedule.





**City of El Cajon**  
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El Cajon, CA 92020

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# THE CITY OF EL CAJON INVITES YOU!



**MARCH 12, 2022**

■ CIRCLE4 **AMPLIFYING THE URBAN FOREST**

## COME & PLANT TREES IN YOUR CITY!

The City of El Cajon is a proud partner of the AMPLify the Urban Forest grant brought to you by CAL FIRE. Join us and help plant 2,000 trees across California this spring!

Find out more at  
<https://investfromthegroundup.org>

Questions? Please email [mbitterl@elcajon.gov](mailto:mbitterl@elcajon.gov)

### WHEN

Saturday, March 12, 2022

### WHAT TIME

8am - 12pm

### WHERE

Wells Park  
1153 East Madison Ave  
El Cajon

